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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS

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SUBJECT: PLACEMENT OF PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

11. President Bush's State of the Union Address received good placement in both the print and electronic media (radio). All four state-run radio channels - 3FM, SpotFM, FM Zimbabwe, and Radio Zimbabwe - carried excerpts of the President's speech starting with the 1700 news programs broadcast on January 29. Segments focused on the President's new HIV/AIDS initiative and policy toward Iraq were also broadcast on FM Zimbabwe, a channel that broadcasts in 14 vernacular languages. The story also dominated the main news programs broadcast in English at 1800 and 2000 on January 29 on 3FM and SpotFM. Radio Zimbabwe (audience estimated at two million) also aired the same news program at 1800 and 2000 hours using the two predominant local languages of Shona and Ndebele. A combined listenership of nearly five million people heard the radio news programs on all four channels.
12. All January 30 carried wire reports on the SOTU address. The independent daily "The Daily News" carried a Reuters article on page 7 under headline "Bush seeks \$825 billion to fight Aids in Africa." The government-controlled daily "The Herald" also picked up a Reuters article about the President's message on Iraq. The paper published the article on page 2 under headline "Bush vows to use full force against Baghdad: Washington told to use caution." Another government-controlled daily "Chronicle," published in Bulawayo, used the same Reuters story, but carried it under the headline "Bush asks UN to hear fresh Iraq evidence." Under headline "Bush seeks US\$15 bln to fight AIDS in Africa" the independent weekly "The Financial Gazette" carried another Reuters wire article on page 30. The pro-government daily "The Daily Mirror" carried an article by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on page 17 under headline "Shares plunge after Bush speech."

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